

# Expectant or new mother Risk Assessment

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### 1. Notifying your NDM Unit

There are two distinct elements to notifying your Unit about your pregnancy. The first is for a risk assessment to take place and the second is the formal notification to your HR team to enable a discussion about your leave and pay entitlements.

#### Notification for a risk assessment

You are encouraged to get in touch with your Unit HR team or, if you prefer in the first instance, your Unit Health and Safety Officer (or Laboratory Manager) as early as possible in your pregnancy. This will allow a risk assessment to take place at an early stage and to discuss any adjustments which may be necessary to protect both you and your unborn baby. A risk assessment is a careful examination of the harm which could be caused through any work activity.

Your request for a risk assessment will be treated confidentially.



### 2. Risks for new and expectant mothers

The University has a legal obligation under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999, to assess risks to employees, including new and expectant mothers, and to do what is reasonably practicable to control those risks. An "expectant or new mother" is an employee who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months, or who is breast-feeding.

There are a variety of hazards and issues that can affect new and expectant mothers ranging from physical hazards: pathogens, chemicals, radiation and manual handling, to workplace conditions: ergonomics, temperature and fatigue.

Upon notification, a [specific risk assessment](#) will be conducted, paying particular attention to risks that could affect your health and safety or your unborn baby/child.

If at your assessment any specific risks are identified that cannot be avoided (e.g. working with dangerous chemicals, radioactive material, etc.), the University will

follow a series of steps to ensure that you are not exposed to that risk.

### 3. The Health and Safety office

If there a significant risk to health and safety, the following will be considered:

- (a) removal of the hazard;
- (b) prevention of exposure to the risk;
- (c) control of exposure to the risk.

Additional details about risk assessments and common risks for new and expectant mothers can be found on the HSE website:

[www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/index.htm)

### 4. Notification for Maternity Leave and Pay

If you have gone directly to your Unit Health and Safety Officer (or Laboratory Manager) for a risk assessment, it is important to remember that you must still notify your HR team about your intention to take maternity leave. In order to qualify for and to claim maternity leave and pay, you will need to advise your HR team of your intention to take maternity leave no later than the end of the qualifying week. The qualifying week is the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth.

For important details about your maternity leave and pay eligibility and entitlements, including the notifications and paperwork that will be required of you, please see the University's Personnel Services website: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family)

### Notification for Antenatal Appointments

You must notify your HR team (and manager) of antenatal appointments, once they have been confirmed by your healthcare provider.

### 5. Breastfeeding Mothers

There is no statutory right to time off work for breastfeeding mothers. However, on your

return to work, you should provide your HR team with written notification if you are breastfeeding, so that appropriate risk assessments can be carried out. You will also be advised of the facilities available to you within your building.



### 6. The Occupational Health Service

Initial queries can be directed to your HR team. However, the Occupational Health Service can assist with health queries you may have about pregnancy and work, and breastfeeding and work.

[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs/)

**Further information is available at;**

[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/maternity/before/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/maternity/before/)

**You should also contact your local HR Team.**